

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 00011 051144Z

10

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 CPR-01 SAM-01 /065 W

----- 107594

O R 051128Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1220

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 0011

E.O.: 11652: GDS

TAGS: POGV, TS

SUBJ: BOURGUIBA ILL

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. AS REPORTED BY BBC AND OTHERS, OFFICIAL TUNISIAN PRESS AGENCY ANNOUNCED SUNDAY, JAN. 4 THAT OWING TO A "SLIGHT INDISPOSITION" PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA'S SCHEDULED RECEPTION OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS JAN 6 IS BEING RESCHEDULED FOR JAN 14. END UNCLASSIFIED.

2. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. EMBASSY HAS NO REASON TO DISBELIEVE CHARACTERIZATION PRESIDENT'S ILLNESS AS "SLIGHT," ALTHOUGH OBVIOUSLY ANY IRREGULARITY OF HEALTH IN A MAN OF BOURGUIBA'S YEARS IS CAUSE FOR CONCERN. HOWEVER, NATURE OF THE PROBLEM MAY NOT BE THE "CHILL" OR "FLU" WHICH PAPERS AND SOME CONTACTS ARE CLAIMING. AS EARLY AS DEC 30 TUNISIAN LADY JOURNALISTS GRANTED GROUP INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT NOTICED (BUT HAVE NOT PUBLISHED) AN APPARENT DISABILITY OR UNUSUAL WEAKNESS IN BOURGUIBA'S LEFT ARM, AND FACT THAT PRESIDENT SEEMED GENERALLY TIRED AND WEAK. PRESIDENT'S WIFE CONFIDED TO ONE JOURNALIST AFTER INTERVIEW THAT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 00011 051144Z

PRESIDENT WAS INDEED "VERY OLD AND VERY TIRED." APPOINTMENTS

SCHEDULED FOR DEC 31 WERE QUIETLY CANCELLED, AND NOTHING AT ALL HAS BEEN SAID OF SURPRISING FAILURE OF BOURGUIBA TO MAKE A NEW YEAR'S SPEECH AND TO CONVOKE GOVERNMENT AND PARTY OFFICIALS FOR FORMAL NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS.

3. OUR CONTACTS OVER PAST FEW DAYS HAVE UNIFORMLY DOWN-PLAYED SERIOUSNESS OF SITUATION, AS WE WOULD EXPECT THEM TO DO IN ANY CASE. FACT THAT WE HAVE JUST COMPLETED UNUSUAL FOUR-DAY HOLIDAY WEEKEND DURING WHICH MANY TUNISIANS LEFT TUNIS OR TUNISIA, AND CONCENTRATED ON FAMILY AFFAIRS RATHER THAN LOCAL POLITICAL SCENE, ACCOUNTS FOR PART OF LACK OF COMMENTARY, EVEN CONCERNING STRIKING ABSENCE FROM SUNDAY MORNING PAPERS OF ANY PHOTO OF PRESIDENT. KING

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: HEALTH, PRESIDENT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TUNIS00011
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760002-0579
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760185/aaaacxux.tel
Line Count: 75
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 APR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <13 APR 2004 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BOURGUIBA ILL
TAGS: PGOV, TS, (BOURGUIBA, HABIB)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006